

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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NAME: Former Sioux County Courthouse

LOCATION: Belden Street, bounded east by the new Courthouse and west by a vacated street, Fort Yates, North Dakota 038, Sioux County 085

OWNER: Sioux County, Fort Yates, North Dakota

ACREAGE: Less than one acre

VBD (LEGAL): South Half, Block 11, Original Townsite of Fort Yates.

UTM: Zone 14, Easting = ~~37120~~
373700, Northing = 5104640; Fort Yates, N. Dak. Quad.

DESCRIPTION: The former Sioux County courthouse, constructed in 1922, is a simple rectangular block of one story and a slightly elevated basement, with a hipped roof. The 34'x 60' structure sits south and west of the town's commercial area, and is positioned slightly behind the new courthouse. The symmetrical front facade consists in a wooden three-light door, a six-light transom above, and a flanking 4-over-4 double hung window on either side. The building's sides each have five windows of the same type as on the front, and basement windows are of glass block. The integrity of the building is excellent, but its condition is deteriorating through lack of maintenance. The site also includes the new courthouse, constructed in 1981, a one-story non-contributing brick structure with a ceramic tile decorative pattern at the cornice level.

SIGNIFICANCE: Date: 1922

Architect: Unknown

Contractor: Adam Ulrich Ostrum

The Sioux County courthouse is significant for the historic place it has occupied in the county governmental organization. Its role in the storage of important documents and its function as the locus of county offices has helped mediate business in the county which is also entirely an Indian reservation. The siting of the new courthouse visually links the two buildings, effectively recalling the role that the old courthouse formerly played. The fact that the block had been associated with the historic courthouse may account in part for the siting of the new courthouse beside the old. The decision to allow the historic building to remain standing is unusual in similar instances of replacement. Since the entire site has an apparent importance to the resource, its historic boundaries remain unchanged for this nomination. As a result, the two buildings on site provide an interesting historical contrast.

Architecturally, the building is rather plain, but akin to the "pattern book" courthouses prevalent in North Dakota counties south and west of the Missouri River. It is one of four such buildings still standing (along with courthouses in Medora, Amidon, and Manning) in that area. A final note is that preservation of the built environment in the county is underdeveloped as compared with the rest of the state. The absence of any county historical society or county sites on the National Register suggest a low level of awareness of historic value in buildings. Listing the courthouse will give the program more visibility in the community and could encourage further preservation in the area.

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